

Affective temporalities in

Gob Squad's Kitchen (you've never had it so good)

Ana Pais

Abstract

In this article I will be drawing upon affect theory to unpack issues of authenticity, mediation, participation in the production *Gob Squad's Kitchen*, by Gob Squad. English/German collective reconstructed Andy Warhol's early film *Kitchen*, shot 47 years before, in the flamboyant *Factory*, starring ephemeral celebrities such as Eve Sedgwick. Alongside *Eat* (1964), *Sleep* (1963) and *Screen Test* (1964-66). Although it premiered in Berlin, in 2007, the show has been touring in several countries and, in 2012, it received the New York Drama Desk Award for Unique Theatrical Experience.

I will be examining how the production's spatial dispositive creates a mediated intimacy that generates affective temporalities and how their performativity allows us to think of the audience as actively engaged in an affective resonance with the stage. Intimacy creates worlds (BERLANT, 2000). It brings audience and performer closer not only to each other but also to the shifting moment of Performance Art's capture by institutional discourses and market value. Unleashing affective temporalities allows the audience to embody its potency, to be, again, "at the beginning".

Drawing upon André Lepecki's notion of reenactments as activations of creative possibilities, I will be suggesting that *Gob Squad's Kitchen* merges past and present by disclosing accumulated affects, promises and deceptions attached to the thrilling period of the sixties in order to reperform a possibility of a new beginning at the heart of a *nowthen* time. In conclusion, this article will shed new light on the performative possibilities of affect to surmount theatrical separation and weave intensive attachments.

A quest for the original, the authentic, the here and now, the real me, the real you, the hidden depths beneath the shiny surfaces of modern life.

(GOB SQUAD)

In January 2012, English/German collective Gob Squad performed *Gob Squad's Kitchen* for a month at the Public Theatre, in New York. This performance reconstructs Andy Warhol's early film *Kitchen*, shot 47 years before, in the flamboyant *Factory*, starring ephemeral celebrities such as Eve Sedgwick. Alongside *Eat* (1964), *Sleep* (1963) and *Screen*

Test (1964-66). The production, however, exceeds in many ways the company's problematically phrased ambitions of authenticity as reperforming *Kitchen*, a film that, in their words "somehow encapsulates the hedonistic experimental energy of the swinging sixties", is also reperforming possibilities of new beginnings, the uplifting spirits of a pivotal period in Western society and in the Performing Arts. Thus, at the core of this production lies the question of the encounter with an original artwork, despite the irony of using this term in reference to Andy Warhol's aesthetics.

In this encounter, affect is crucial. In *Performing Remains*, Rebecca Schneider suggests that the circulation of affect in the embodied practice of reenactments is, amongst other things, cross-temporal and cross-spatial. When one re-performs an event from the past, one is both making that past/place present and resending the present/place to the past. In this paradoxical move, Schneider further sustains affect circulates in material remains. When reactivated, they create atmospheres that have an influence on us:

Affect can circulate, beating atmosphere-altering tendencies, in material remains or gestic/ritual remains, carried in a sentence or a song, shifting in and through bodies in encounter. (SCHNEIDER 2011a, 36).

Differently to other presentations in Berlin, London or Zürich, the series of reenacted *Kitchen*'s at the Public Theatre had a particular resonance with the remains of underground culture in New York City and with counterculture movements of the 60s/70s. Not only is it still vibrating in downtown buildings, streets or garages but also some people in the audience came from the factory scene, others could have experienced the unique spirit of the time or even were relatives of Ronald Tavel, the playwright of *Kitchen*. The city was the stage for a temporal and affective encounter with the past, that intensified the cross-temporality of affect circulation. Gob Squad's artistic appropriation of *Kitchen*, clearly framed as theatrical, gestures towards enhancing the circulation of affect across times, specifically, the excitement and the openness of being at the beginning of a new era. How does the *Gob Squad's Kitchen* reperform the political, social and artistic possibilities of new beginnings?

Affecting Reenactments

Affect has resurfaced as a pressing topic both in the humanities and scientific research. A common concern with issues regarding the sensory contact with the world, technological mediation and cultural discourses versus neurobiological mechanisms has proliferated in the past five to seven years. The “affective turn”, as Patricia Clough coined the phenomenon, is now a thriving interdisciplinary field (CLOUGH 2007). In Theatre and Performance Studies, there is an increasingly interest in thinking affect in performance and the performance of affect. The significant number of distinguished and emerging scholars engaging with the recent tendencies in Affect Theory is evident (RIDOUT 2006; 2008; THOMPSON 2009; DOLAN 2005; HURLEY 2010; HURLEY, Erin e WARNER 2012; WELTON 2012; MANNING 2009). Both the philosophical and the psychoanalytical tendencies in Affect Theory have been often articulated in Performance Studies research because it discloses fundamental issues such as: audience engagement, theatrical effects, embodied experience, transformative processes, politics and aesthetics of theatrical encounters, simultaneity of production and reception in performance. This “felt” urgency of understanding performance through the lens of affect is particularly striking as emotions and feelings have traditionally been a major topic in theatre, dance or live performance canons, as Joseph Roach brilliantly demonstrated (ROACH 1985).

In tandem, exciting literature came out in response to the late 20th century and early 21st century burst of re-performances, re-doings and re-enactments of performances from the 60s/70s. A young generation of artists had the urge to engage in a direct contact, that is, via experience, with the legendary moment of the explosion of Performance Art as a way of accessing their historical inheritance. Concurrently, celebrated performance artists reperformed or had their work reperformed as a way of preserving the memory and history of Performance Art. Marina Abramovic’s is the the perfect example of such an impetus. After having reperformed her seminal *Lips of Thomas* together with performances of Bruce Nauman, Vito Acconci or Valie Export, in the event *Seven Easy Pieces* at the Guggenheim Museum (2005), the MoMA hosted a unique retrospective of Abramovic’s work, in 2010. The exhibit displayed her major pieces in redoings by performers she trained while Marina herself performed a new piece - *The Artist is Present*. For the entire duration of the exhibit (museum hours for three months), she sat in the ground-floor entry hall across from whoever wished to sit with her (and

line up for hours). The performance's spectacular apparatus in the hall and the making-off documentary are problematic considering Performance Art radical political stands against the art market and reproduction economies, let alone the artistic agenda of entering the mainstream. Different from re-staging a play or interpreting a musical or choreographic score, remaking performance art works raises problematic issues concerning documentation, authenticity, originality, self-referentiality and archiving (JONES 2011; BURT 2003; BURT 2009; FRANKO 1989; Morgan et al. 2010; LUTTICKEN 2005; JONES, Amelia and HEATHFIELD 2012). Furthermore, it puts on the spot the creative potential of repetition as unrevealed forces or modes of "re-affecting" (SCHNEIDER 2011b, 6) as opposed to insignificant archaeologies of reproducing.

Critical thinking is divided between considering reenactments as nostalgic pastiche or forceful gestures. Richard Schechner, for instance, claims that redoinings of groundbreaking performance events derives from a nostalgia inherent to repetition, at odds with the "audacity" of the original (SCHECHNER 2010, 910–11). For Schechner this is a sign of the times, a time of "lost possibilities" for new generations of avant-garde artists choose to repeat the previous avant-garde (or repeat itself) instead of creating a new one. That is why, according to Schechner, the avant-garde is conservative.

On the contrary, critical approaches that examine reenactments through the lens of affect tend to emphasize the political and creative possibilities of such encounters with history. In the article "The Body as Archive: Will to Re-Enact and the Afterlives of Dances", André Lepecki argues that reenactments derive from a "will to archive", the gesture that recognizes in a performance or dance work latent and unrealized "creative fields" (LEPECKI 2010, 31). The drive of the artist to reenacting a work comes, thus, from this capacity of connection with what is not yet manifest or "actualized", which explains the urgency of going through the bodily experience it calls for. Reenactments, suggest Lepecki, "activate" or "unlock" creative possibilities of a "transformational archive" - the body – promoting "singular modes of politicizing time and economies of authorship" (idem, 46). The previously mentioned research by Rebecca Schneider (2010; 2011a) and André Lepecki's article provide enough evidence of the potentiality of affect in reenactments and reperformances of past works.

Thereupon, the term affect needs some clarification. What does it mean exactly? As far as affect theory goes, there is a vast array of definitions of affect, as opposed to emotion or feelings, at our disposal. In a deleuzian/spinozist framework, affect is

intensity, the flux of live passing through in continual change, differing from emotions in as much as they are “unqualified” or “uncategorized” forms of experience (autonomic bodily reactions) (MASSUMI 1995). Instead, feelings are related to an awareness of felt experience, a proprioceptive notion of what happens in the body or of what is performed by the body. Immediately, António Damásio’s research on the neurobiology of the brain in which he puts forth a concept of consciousness as a “feeling of what happens” comes to mind (DAMÁSIO 2000). In a psychological based approach, affect is considered as a underlying “motivational system”, biologically hardwired and arguably universal (SEDGWICK, Eve Kosofsky e FRANK 1995) or as material events with an energetic dimension that involve a judgment or attitude towards the object of affection (BRENNAN 2004).

In an effort to clarify the ambiguity of affect in relation to emotion and feeling, particularly in theatre practices, Erin Hurley proposes a definition of affect as that which “happens to us” and “through us” out of our conscious control whereas emotion refers to bodily responses that organize our relational experience in the world (HURLEY 2010). Feelings involve the conscious perception and interpretation of what we feel – emotions and affects. From this brief sample, finding a common definition of affect will probably be an impossible and perhaps irrelevant task. Despite this instability what matters the most is not what it is but what does, in other words, it’s performativity.

As Sarah Ahmed suggests emotions are performative: they do things (AHMED 2004)¹. In her social model of circulation, Ahmed proposes that emotions shape the surface of bodies as attractive or repulsive, that is, they define an orientation to the other that is determined by cultural narratives. They can stick to or slide on bodies, determining their limits. Ideas of movement and intensification are important in so far as they identify two of the main features of affect behavior, which make them, precisely, hard to research on. In this article, I will use the term affect to refer to sensitive charges attached to emotions, thoughts or sensations, which enables us not only to distinguish it from emotions and feelings but also to avoid falling into recurrent dichotomies (conscious/unconscious, body/mind).

Considering performance as a critical site to explore the cultural, philosophical, artistic and political issues of affect in contemporary societies, in this article I will be looking at *Gobsquads’s Kitchen* in light of the affective temporalities it performs and,

¹ Although she is concerned with emotions, only for analytical purposes can they be separated from sensation (of affect) in experience. (AHMED 2004, 6)

hereby, engages the audience in a reciprocal movement that impacts on the performance. Drawing upon André Lepecki's notion of reenactments as activations of creative possibilities, I will be suggesting that *Gob Squad's Kitchen* merges past and present by disclosing accumulated affects, promises and deceptions attached to the thrilling period of the sixties in order to reperform a possibility of a new beginning at the heart of a *nowthen* time. Hence, I will be examining how the production's spatial dispositive creates a mediated intimacy that generates affective temporalities and how their performativity allows us to think of the audience as actively engaged in an affective resonance with the stage. Affective temporalities that affective temporalities are moments in which affect can unlock "non exhausted creative fields of *impalpable possibilities*" inherent to the work's afterlife (LEPECKI, 2010: 31).

Participation through the 4th wall

Before taking their seats, the audience is invited to visit Gob Squad's Factory, the studio where the reconstruction of *Kitchen* will take place. Attentive and smiling, actors welcome spectators through the studio and lead them to the auditorium. Like in the original movies, black and white images, captured from a fix camera, are projected in three simultaneous screens that cover the front stage entirely. At the center, the image of a room with a kitchen table, chairs and scarce props appears first. Gradually, comes the screen on the left (*Sleep*) and the one on the right (*Screen Test*). The only scripted movie - by Ronald Tavel, the founder of the theatre of the ridiculous (cfr. "Ronald Tavel. His Life and Work" 2011), *Kitchen* is the core structure of the performance. When lights go down, Maria Callas' penetrating voice singing an aria of *Lakme* filled the room like in the original Factory, where Warhol used to listen to the opera singer. Simon Will (or any other actor, depending on the day) approaches the front stage and says:

Hello, thank you for coming and welcome to Gobsquad's factory. I am Simon Will and I will be playing Simon in the film *Kitchen*, by Andy Warhol. It's 1965 and it's New York. **This film** that we are in **it's the essence of its time. We are at the beginning of everything.**

As the title suggests the welcoming moment announces a kind of reenactment closer to artistic appropriation than to a rigorous redoing of the movie. In the fictional factory, the actors aim at performing Warhol ready-made celebrities, in an ambiguous playfulness with biographical data and scenic personae, distinctive of the company's aesthetics. *Gob Squad's Kitchen* is structured in long improvisation sections anchored in pivotal moments of the film: the scarce lines from Tavel's script that were actually said (for instance, the dialogue: "how do you like your coffee? I like my coffee like I like my men – hot, sweet and black!" ou "My life is like that layer cake. Year after year, one year piled on top of the other, layer after meaningless layer"), recurring topics (beach, cake, eroticism, sexuality, friendship), idle bodily attitudes, stripped shirt costumes, images and gestures (namely, Eve Sedgwick's Kitchen superstar lying on the table mimicking movements of an exercise bicycle). The sound design modulates these elements weaving upbeat rock hits from the 60s (*Pink Floyd*, *The Stooges*, *Rolling Stones*, amongst others) with movie soundtracks by Truffaut and Godard that thicken the affective atmosphere in the room.

Halfway through the show, one of the performers escapes the film. Assuring the audience that there is no need to be an actor to be able to perform the task of *Screen Test* he picks a spectator to replace him, unveiling the hidden agenda of the performance: spectators must replace all the actors on stage. The melancholic suspense of the remixed *House of Four Doors*, by *Moody Blues*, echoes ironically the actor leaving the stage/studio: "House of four doors/ I could live there forever/ House of four doors/Would it be there forever?". Sound design underlines the turning point of the show towards the ultimate goal of the role reversal is to facilitate "15 minutes of fame" to whom, perhaps better than the actors themselves, could embody the Warholian prophecy. The search for "authenticity", Gobsquad explains, seemed possible only if materialized by spectators as it is precisely the common citizen who is the best candidate to become a star, according to Warhol's criteria:

In the search for authenticity, identity and the lost feeling of a myth-laden time and era, one's own identity captured in the here and now, along with contemporary life, came into permanent conflict with the constructed characters and identities of the notorious "superstars" from Warhol's factory of the 1960s. (...) they [the performers] believe that

this is a more consistent and believable representation of the “superstars” and that they are even able to perform a better version of their own lives. Kitchen ends when all the Gob Squad performers have been replaced by audience members and the real kitchen from today can begin. (SQUAD 2010, 73)

In this sense, the combination of performer’s scenic persona, the potential celebrity of spectators and the actuality of Warhol’s prophecy weave a subtle web of connections. From the moment the actor crosses the dividing line between stage and audience, substitutions accelerate. Remotely monitored by the actors seating in the auditorium, the spectators on stage are instructed what to say through headphones. Meanwhile, the performance grows in private and confessional tonalities of intimacy, offering the appropriate conditions for one of the most unexpected scenes: *Sleep* converts in *Kiss*. The actress/actor on the screen of *Sleep* asks the spectator who substitutes her/him to kiss her/him. In the kitchen, there are only spectators-performers. Looking in the direction of the bed (*Sleep* set) they place their hands in front of their mouth, as if scandalized. *Kiss* disappears from the screen while the last spectator steps on stage. In a close up take, s/he repeats Mailer’s words:

We are the beginning. We are the essence of our time. And in one hundred years, people will look at this and say that’s why.

Spectators-actors close their eyes and put their hands over the headphones, as the remixed pop song *The Fairest of the Seasons*, by Nico, one of Warhol’s celebrities, plays in the background. The screen turns black only to show again the kitchen set, though now in colors. The spectators-performers act spontaneously, without instructions. For few seconds, they own the stage.

The last lines of the show are not depicted from Ronald Tavel’s script nor are they improvised. New York Times’ journalist Norman Mailer wrote them shortly after the first private screening of the film in 1965. Horrified at the gloomy and lethargic atmosphere of Kitchen, he wrote:

One hundred years from now they will look at Kitchen and see the essence of every boring, dead day one’s ever had in a city and

say, “yes, that’s why the horror came down”. Kitchen shows that better than any other work of that time.

Gob Squad adapts these sentences to frame both the temporal and the affective alignments of the reconstruction. They are repeated thrice: in the beginning, when the performer locates the audience in the here/now of the production as New York/1965; in the middle, as an emphasis of the mid of the piece; and in the end, a spectator repeats them. Repetition reconfigures the past as present, the spectator as performer, the horror as exhilaration. Eliminating Mailer’s prophecy, the end of the sentence is left open to new beginnings: to restart. Now and then meet at the crux of a performative gesture envisioned to, on the one hand, grasp the “essence” of Warhol’s time – the mythologized 60s when the foundations of contemporary performance were laid – and, on the other hand, giving audience members 15 minutes of “fame”, thus, allows them to embody and perform a new beginning.

This gesture is also political. The alleged failure of authenticity motivates role reversal on the grounds that the audience would do a better job at performing “pop-celebrities”. Yet, mistakes or the “inadequacy of the copy”, to use R. Schneider’s expression, can be generate a fruitful back and forth and sideways movement into the hidden creative possibilities of a past work; it might, in fact, “get right” things that a linear conception of time and history cannot. (SCHNEIDER 2011a, 6). Like affect, these possibilities pervade, circulate and attach themselves to the work’s afterlife. Role reversal is the theatrical strategy that involves audience members in the reenactment of those possibilities. When the last spectator repeats in the first person plural “we are in the beginning, we are the essence of our time”, the past contracts the present into a potency of feeling that is also embedded in the potency of thinking and action. Affective temporalities generate, thus, worlds of political, social and artistic possibilities that lie on individual as much as collective affective mobilizing forces. Yet, in *Gob Squad’s Kitchen* role reversal is more than a strategy of empowering of the audience that participatory projects boast, not without criticism. Deeply connected to the performativity of affect, role reversal is one aspect of audience participation. Both the spectators that replace actors and the audience that remains seated participate in the affective temporalities generated by the production. How are affective temporalities generated and how does this participation occur?

Affective resonance: the function of the spectator

Affective temporalities are engendered by a mediated intimacy or, in the company's own terms, an "alienated intimacy". Taking advantage of the paradoxical intimacy technologies of mediation have made familiar at a global scale, performing behind cameras - using close ups and amplification of voices – bridges the distance of theatrical separation. It makes one feel closer. Mediation creates intimacy and, as Laurence Berlant reminds us, "intimacy creates worlds and usurps places meant for other kinds of relations" (BERLANT 2000, 2). Berlant argues that intimacy itself is a force (a drive) that builds worlds through practices such as institutional frames, ideologies and tacit fantasies. Private experiences of intimacy are embedded in collective narratives of sharing, informed by those frames, ideologies and fantasies. We must ask, then, which narratives of sharing at play in Western theatre paradigm is *Gob Squad's Kitchen* addressing and, perhaps, reconfiguring. What space is being created and what "kinds of relations" are built here?

Materializing the naturalist "4th wall" in a screen that divides the stage from the audience, Gob Squad produces a mediated intimacy. This intimacy creates a space where affective temporalities can emerge reshaping the public and the private. Contrary to narratives of the audience as a temporary community of shared feelings, what Gob Squad opens up is a space for individual, perhaps contradictory, affects and thoughts to arise alongside an atmosphere of "new beginnings" attached to affective temporalities. This atmosphere is not necessarily shared by all the audience members – people feel and think differently and there is no way we can account for that diversity - but it is certainly set in circulation and intensified by the thrilling or deceptive experiences, memories or projections one can have. In this sense, the most important aspect of spectators' participation is their performance of affective temporalities as much as the audience that remains seated.

In the West, the narrative of intimacy in the theatre consists of a private experience that takes place in the public sphere. This narrative is rooted both in ontological distance as the necessary condition for theatricality (cfr. FÉRAL 2002) and in fantasies of temporary communities holding shared feelings. Specifically, I am referring to the 19th century theatrical model that magnifies the separation between stage and

auditorium. Passively in the dark and in silence, the audience is subjected to the increasing spectacular effects as well as to disciplining social and moral norms. The spectator's private experience is, thus, a territory of vulnerability where notions of communities of shared feelings build national or moral identities (cfr. FISCHER-LICHTE 2002; SENNETT 1974). Idealized theatrical encounters ingrain this disciplinary conception of temporary communities assuming that shared place and time consistently correspond to a collective sharing of thoughts, emotions and feelings.

The strategy of a mediated intimacy reconfigures the traditional relationship between actors and audience. Although apparently “empowering the audience” giving away the stage entirely, *Gob Squads's Kitchen* keeps a shifting balance between effects and affects. Spectators are invited to take the stage but under certain conditions. Actors supply instructions via headphones, a procedure the company calls “remote performing”. Spectators are not free to express themselves except during the very last seconds of the show when we are sent to the “real” here and now and in the dialogue between the performer and the spectator in *Screen Test* set. Conversely, breaking down narratives of shared communities, *Gob Squads's Kitchen* emphasizes the active role of the audience in the theatre, either seated or on stage, as a participant in emerging affective temporalities. The activity of the spectator regards an intensification and amplification of affect – of new beginnings and worlds. S/he participated in a moving together, a reciprocal movement between stage and audience that is both private and public, social and aesthetic, affective and political.

One could say, the spectator participates in a *co-motion*, a movement of affects that determines the felt quality of the performance making it unique. I am arguing that this moving together, as the etymology of the word suggests, takes place through a specific kind of listening – a listening of affects that feeds back the performance and intensifies it. I am proposing the concept affective resonance to describe a function of the audience that can be thought of as the mechanism of affective mobilization, combining degrees of tension and attention, or of looseness and distraction, re-affecting the stage. This repetition does not entail feeling or thinking the same – impressions, emotions, sensations or thoughts - but sharing a common potentiality of individuals to engage with a resonant movement and be moved by it, through an (in)tense listening.

In *Gob Squads's Kitchen*, this is quite literal. Not only does the audience resonate and intensify the potency of the affective atmosphere brought forth by the performance, but also performers listen and feedback that resonance. As the screen mediates the

relationship between stage and audience, conversely, it actually blocks visual contact. The performers are forced to actively listen to the atmosphere in the room and finding ways of engaging with the on-going movement surmounting the obstacle they created for themselves. Sean Patten, one of the actors and co-founders of the company, confides the ambivalence of listening to but not seeing the audience:

It's a very nice mixture. You can hear when people react or when they find something funny, if they are a bit tense or when they are bored, but you can't see them. Every time we go on tour the set goes up and it's like coming home again because that never changes for us. So we feel very comfortable in that little room. We can sort of have fun just for us but you're also tuned in as to how it's going down. I think particularly for the audience members that [the screen] is really helpful. If you were to do that kiss scene on a stage with hundreds of people watching it wouldn't be like that at all but because you're here in this little intimate space you do feel like it is an intimate thing. People do feel secure and protected paradoxically. You know that there are people watching....

(Sean Patten interviewed by Ana Pais, 29th November 2012)

Listening can pick much information about how the audience is reacting. Despite performers and spectators cannot see each other for the most part of the show, it is clear that being “in tune” is crucial for performers awareness of the felt quality of the performance. Again, familiarity and trust seem to be crucial not only to establish a safe bridge for the audience to cross but also to create an affective atmosphere for the performers. The combination of a long-term intimacy behind the screen with the mediated one that comes across from the stage generates an uncanny protection for spectators to accept kissing an actor. Hence, performers deeply listen to the ways spectators participate in affective temporalities and transform time, place and words: *then* into *now*, *there* into *here*, and *you* into *I*. Attunement signals the need for connection in audience engagement, though it does not imply a harmonious one. As I will try to show, affective temporalities potentiate precisely a mix of different thoughts, feelings and memories that will make the singularity of each performance.

Reperform, restart

This is not the first time the company makes use of mediation technologies to engage with the audience (*Room Service* or *Super Night Shot*). In fact, it is a hallmark. The format of *live interactive films* (SQUAD 2010, 79) explores how video technologies can, while “avoiding proximity and bodily contact”, engenders other possible forms of intimacy and created a safe place for the spectator (idem, 78). However, adopting reenactment as a practice of intimate encounters with history and artistic events in the past, Gob Squad reinvents the public and private aspects of theatrical experience. If intimacy creates spaces through practices, reenactments are practices that infuse those spaces with multiple temporal layers. Conversely, affect infuses time. In this production, the affect of a “restart” or being at the beginning of “everything” infuses the reenacted period of the 60s. The potency of initiating regards the personal lives of those who are living the now/then as well as the historical narratives the performing arts.

Gob Squad’s reenactment comes into contact with the explosive emergence of Performance Art, prior to its capture by institutional discourses and market value. At that moment, the creative possibilities of what it could become were infinite and not quite materialized. Intimacy creates spaces for listening through those unrealized possibilities of Performance Art. One could say that *Gob Squad’s Kitchen* allows us to listen through a *performative fold*. I am here playing with the notion of “cybernetic fold”, suggested by Eve Sedgwick and Frank Adams in their reading of Silvan Tomkins’ affect theory. Generally overlapping with the 60s, the cybernetic fold is defined as a period in which the idea of computers, prior to its actual material development, informs scientific conceptions of how the mind and the brain work. The possibilities of what a computer could be were both unrealized and unlimited. Likewise, many unrealized possibilities of Performance Art throb within the performative fold, exceeding the actual manifestations known to us. In this sense, *Gob Squad’s Kitchen* activates creative fields of the work and unrealized possibilities of the performative fold insofar as it discloses the unlimited power of the imagination and the political agency of affect.

Gob Squad’s Kitchen unfolds a delicate balance between the goal set by the task the company take upon itself - to have only spectators on stage at the end of the performance – and the affects potentiated by affective temporalities generated by the reenactment of Kitchen. On the one hand, mediated intimacy builds up a safe and

trustful environment that reassures the spectator when challenged to participate directly in the performance. This is an effect granted by a conditioned commotion or movement of affects. On the other hand, the affects of beginnings potentiated by affective temporalities give the audience a moment of open possibilities and allows for the emergence of contradictory affects, from nostalgia to enthusiasm. These differential states ensue from the space that is granted to the personal experience and memory of each spectator, activating an unpredictable affective resonance within the frame of intimacy designed by the theatrical apparatus. I have been sustaining that affective temporalities ensue in the space created by mediated intimacy. It is now possible to further argue that Gob Squad reenactment gestures towards recognizing affective temporalities as an unrevealed creative of possibility of Kitchen. The artist's capacity to identify this hidden possibility at the core of the work activated affective temporalities. If, in the case of Gob Squad's Kitchen, the locked creative possibilities are affects emanating from the spirit of a time when "everything was possible, then, affective temporalities potentiate (but do not determine) thrilling affects associated with the turmoil of moments when the future fraught with change.

Counterculture movement of the 60s (anti-war, anti-racism, anti-canon, for the rights of minorities and freedom of expression), particularly strong in American art and culture, is one of the most intense and fruitful moments of collective memory of the West. The creative vibe of that period is related to unprecedented student and artistic revolutions in the US, particularly, in New York and San Francisco underground culture. For this reason, the 60s are legendary. Exhilarating, say the ones who didn't lived them; nostalgic, say the ones that did. Concentrating the highest expectations, enthusiasm and hope for a world with more justice and solidarity, in proportion the 60s cherish the highest disappointments, exhaustion and disbelief. In Gob Squad's Kitchen, affective temporalities trigger these individual and colective, private and public layers to the movement of commotion. In the words of Teresa Brennan each person's personal history is like a vertical line intersected by the horizontal axis of transmission of affect, or the line of the heart (BRENNAN 2004, 85). In the theatre, the spectator's line of the heart is intersected both by affects transmitted from the stage as much as from the other spectators. Such configuration opens a space for difference and a plurality of affects engaging with the work. These affects are not and cannot be predetermined in as much as there is no way of predicting nostalgia or excitement; it is not possible to calculate the intimate connection with history. The line of the heart is the most volatile level of

engagement with a work. Having lived the 60s directly or not, the proximity with such cultural moment that affective temporalities allow for potentiates affect, sensitive charges of optimism, joy and free love that that period, as few others, intensely witnessed. In this sense, unlocking affects attached to youth and revolutionary culture of the 60s engenders an affective economy that lends to the unforeseen affects that emerge from thickened temporalities.

In conclusion, *Gob Squad's Kitchen* unlocks unrealized creative possibilities of the original Warhol's film. The cross-temporal circulation of affect discloses a reciprocal movement between stage and audience, an affective resonance. The politics of affect at stake regards audience partaking in affective temporalities, either embodying performatively new beginnings on stage or engaging and intensifying the affective atmosphere in the room. Produced by a mediated intimacy, affective temporalities detach the drive that creates spaces around us from a private experience of a temporary community and reattaches it to the performativity of affect as collective process experienced individually. This means that narratives of sharing in the theatre, sustained by an ontological distance, gives way to practices of being together, enhanced by the performativity of affect. Unleashing affective temporalities allows the audience to embody its potency, to be, again, "at the beginning" of unimagined revolutions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AHMED, Sara. 2004. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Nova Iorque: Routledge.
- BERLANT, Lauren. 2000. "Intimacy: A Special Issue." In *Intimacy*, 1–8. Londres e Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- BRENNAN, Teresa. 2004. *The Transmission of Affect*. Itaca: Cornell University.
- BURT, Ramsay. 2003. "Memory, Repetition and Critical Intervention. The Politics of Historical Reference in Recent European Dance." *Performance Research* 8 (2): 34–41.
- . 2009. "History, Memory, and the Virtual in Current European Dance Practice." *Dance Chronicle* 32 (3) (November 2): 442–467. doi:10.1080/01472520903276800. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01472520903276800>.
- CLOUGH, Patricia, ed. 2007. *The Affective Turn. Theorizing the Social*. Durham e Londres: Duke University Press.

- DAMÁSIO, António. 2000. *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*. New York: Mariner Books.
- DOLAN, Jill. 2005. *Utopia in Performance. Finding Hope at the Theatre*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- FÉRAL, Josette. 2002. "The Specificity of Theatrical Language." *SubStanc* 31 (2 &3): 94–108.
- FISCHER-LICHTE, Erika. 2002. *History of European Drama and Theatre*. Londres e Nova Iorque: Routledge.
- FRANKO, Mark. 1989. "Repeatability , Reconstruction and Beyond." *Theatre Journal* 41 (1): 56–74.
- GOB SQUAD. "Gobsquad's Kitchen (you've Never Had It so Good)."
- HURLEY, Erin. 2010. *Theatre & Feeling*. Houndmills: Palgrave.
- HURLEY, Erin e WARNER, Sarah. 2012. "Special Section: 'Affect/Performance/Politics.'" *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 26 (2): 99–107. doi:10.1353/dtc.2012.0000.
http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/journal_of_dramatic_theory_and_criticism/v026/26.2.hurley03.html.
- JONES, Amelia. 2011. "The Artist Is Present': Artistic Re-Enactments and the Impossibility of Presence." *TDR/The Drama Review* 55 (1) (March): 16–45. doi:10.1162/DRAM_a_00046.
http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/DRAM_a_00046.
- JONES, Amelia and HEATHFIELD, Adrian. 2012. *Perform, Repeat, Record. Live Art in History*. Bristol e Chicago: Intellect.
- LEPECKI, André. 2010. "The Body as Archive: Will to Re-Enact and the Afterlives of Dances." *Dance Research Journal* 42 (2): 28–48.
- LUTTICKEN, Sven, ed. 2005. *Life, Once More: Forms of Reenactment in Contemporary Art*. Roterdão: Witte de With.
- MANNING, Erin. 2009. *Relationescapes: Movement, Art, Philosophy*. Massachussets: The MIT Press.
- MASSUMI, Brian. 1995. "The Autonomy of Affect." *Cultural Critique* (31): 83–109.
- Morgan, Robert C, Joseph Beuys, Joan Jonas, Gina Pane, Vito Acconci, Dennis Oppenheim, Nam June, Alison Knowles, and Ann Hamilton. 2010. "Thoughts on Re-Performance, Experience, and Archivism" 96: 1–15.
- RIDOUT, Nicholas. 2006. *Stage Fright, Animals and Other Theatrical Problems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- . 2008. “Welcome to the Vibratorium.” *Senses & Society* 3 (2): 221–231.
- ROACH, Joseph. 1985. *The Player's Passion. Studies in the Science of Acting*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- “Ronald Tavel. His Life and Work.” 2011. *The Estate of Ronal Tavel*.
<http://www.ronaldtavel.com>.
- SCHECHNER, Richard. 2010. “The Conservative Avant-Garde.” *New Literary History* (41): 895–913.
- SCHNEIDER, Rebecca. 2010. “Protest Now and Again.” *TDR/The Drama Review* 54 (2) (June): 7–11. doi:10.1162/dram.2010.54.2.7.
<http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/dram.2010.54.2.7>.
- . 2011a. *Performing Remains. Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment*. Londres e Nova Iorque: Routledge.
- . 2011b. *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment*. New York: Routledge.
- SEDGWICK, Eve Kosofsky e FRANK, Adams. 1995. “Shame in the Cybernetic Fold : Reading Silvan Tomkins.” *Critical Inquiry* 21 (2): 496–522.
- SENNETT, Richard. 1974. *The Fall of the Public Man*. Londres: Penguin.
- SQUAD, Gob. 2010. *Gob Squad Reader*. Berlim: Gob Squad.
- THOMPSON, James. 2009. *Performance Affects. Applied Theatre and the End of Effect*. Hampshire e Nova Iorque: Palgrave.
- WELTON, Martin. 2012. *Feeling Theatre*. Houndmills: Palgrave.